



DHSS Worksite Wellness Committee

Steering Committee Members

2012-2013

Division for Regulation and Licensure

Tracy Niekamp

Program Manager
Section for Long Term Care

"I have struggled with my weight and living healthy my whole life. Since May 2011, I have made some really important changes to ensure that I am here for my family...long term! Wellness is important to me so that I can be a good role model of health and help my children to see the value of healthy eating, exercise and living smoke free. The four most important reasons that wellness is important to me are my husband, Kenny, and my three children, Hailey (13), Olivia (12) and Clayton (12)."

Picture: Tracy poses with her daughter and son after their first 5K run/walk (they ran it!) on October 1, 2011.



Nancy Scherer

Child Care Supervisor
Section For Child Care Regulation

"Wellness is a lifestyle that is healthy but easy to live. If you set your standards too high or do things that are too hard or uncomfortable, you will not stick to it. Incorporating things into my everyday life that are fun and enjoyable make for a happier and healthier me."



Division of Administration

Debbie Klindt

Asst. Bureau Chief
General Services

"Wellness is important to me because high blood pressure and heart disease runs in my family. By eating healthy foods and exercising, I can hopefully prevent heart issues in the future. I love fruits and vegetables so it isn't hard for me to eat healthy, but I need to stay motivated to stay on track. My goal is to stay healthy so I can spend quality time with my grandchildren when I retire."





Division for Community and Public Health

Michael Pethan

Regional Coordinator
Section for Special Health Services

“For me, wellness means paying attention to what my mind, body and spirit is telling me. My wellness goals for 2012 including eating healthy, walking, and finding new ways to enjoy my family, friends, and coworkers.”



Lisa Brown

Bureau Chief
Section for WIC and Nutrition Services

“What does wellness mean to me? Making the choice to be physically active whenever possible and enjoying my less than nutritious food favorites in moderation. Taking care of yourself – eating well and being physically active makes every aspect of life easier and more enjoyable.”



Pat Simmons

Nutrition Specialist
Section for Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention

“Wellness is a lifestyle. It means thinking about what is important for my health, such as not smoking, eating well and moving more, and making the choice to include these things in my everyday activities. I want to live as long as I can and be the best example for my family.”





Director's Office

Carrie Haley

Human Resource Manager
Office of Human Resources

"After the birth of my son three years ago, I realized it was not all about me any longer. I had a little person who needed me to play/interact with him and set the good example. I knew I needed to lose weight so I could do all the things I needed to do as a mom. I enjoy going for walks and playing ball outside with him. I also want him to see me making good food choices at home so he too would adopt those behaviors, and he has. He said to me over lunch one Saturday, 'Mommy, I wanna keep you forever!' so I need to take good care of myself so I can be there for him forever."



Karen Kliethermes

Office of Primary Care and Rural Health
Center for Health Equity

"To me, wellness is the journey of making conscious choices that support good physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. It is about being an active and aware participant in our own life and well being. Wellness is important to me because I want to play an active role in the lives of both my children and grandchildren."





Senior and Disability Services

Douglas Henry

Regional Manager

Division of Senior and Disability Services



"I was raised in Southeast Missouri, and moved to Springfield to attend Missouri State University and have lived there ever since. I've worked for the Division of Aging/DHSS for almost 27 years, and have enjoyed the continual dynamic atmosphere this agency brings. I've been actively involved over the years with the Alzheimer's Association and Boxer Rescue of Southwest Missouri. I enjoy church activities, spending time with my family, and being outdoors. I can't imagine living anywhere but Missouri.

Wellness to me is more than just the absence of physical disease. It encompasses not only your physical condition, but your mental and spiritual attitude toward living life in a positive manner, giving help and service to others, and greeting each day with joy, laughter and gratitude.

I've worked with older adults for 30 years, and have seen numerous times how choices made in youth and young adulthood (when most of us feel virtually bulletproof) can have adverse affects later in life. As the old saying goes, 'You can pick your friends, but not your relatives,' and many people have familial predispositions to certain health challenges. By increasing my knowledge of healthier living habits and then working to put that knowledge into practice, I feel that I'm doing more to improve my chances of living a healthier, more independent life now and for the rest of my days.

Michael Longanecker

Assistant Fiscal Chief

Financial Support Unit



Having been a state employee since 1988, Michael has spent the majority of his career in accounting, procurement, facilities management, and budget oversight roles. Michael joined DHSS in November 2010 as a Fiscal and Administrative Manager within the Division of Senior and Disability Services. Michael, his wife Debbie, and their two young children, Jeremy and Mackenna, live in Jefferson City, along with their Westie, Riley.

"Wellness is more than the mere absence of disease or illness. It is the feeling of well-being achieved through the proper balance of mind, body and spirit. Learning how different factors contribute to my overall health and joyfulness should help me be a better spouse, parent, workmate, and friend."